

# STATE

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December 2013

# MAGAZINE

## Head of the CLASS

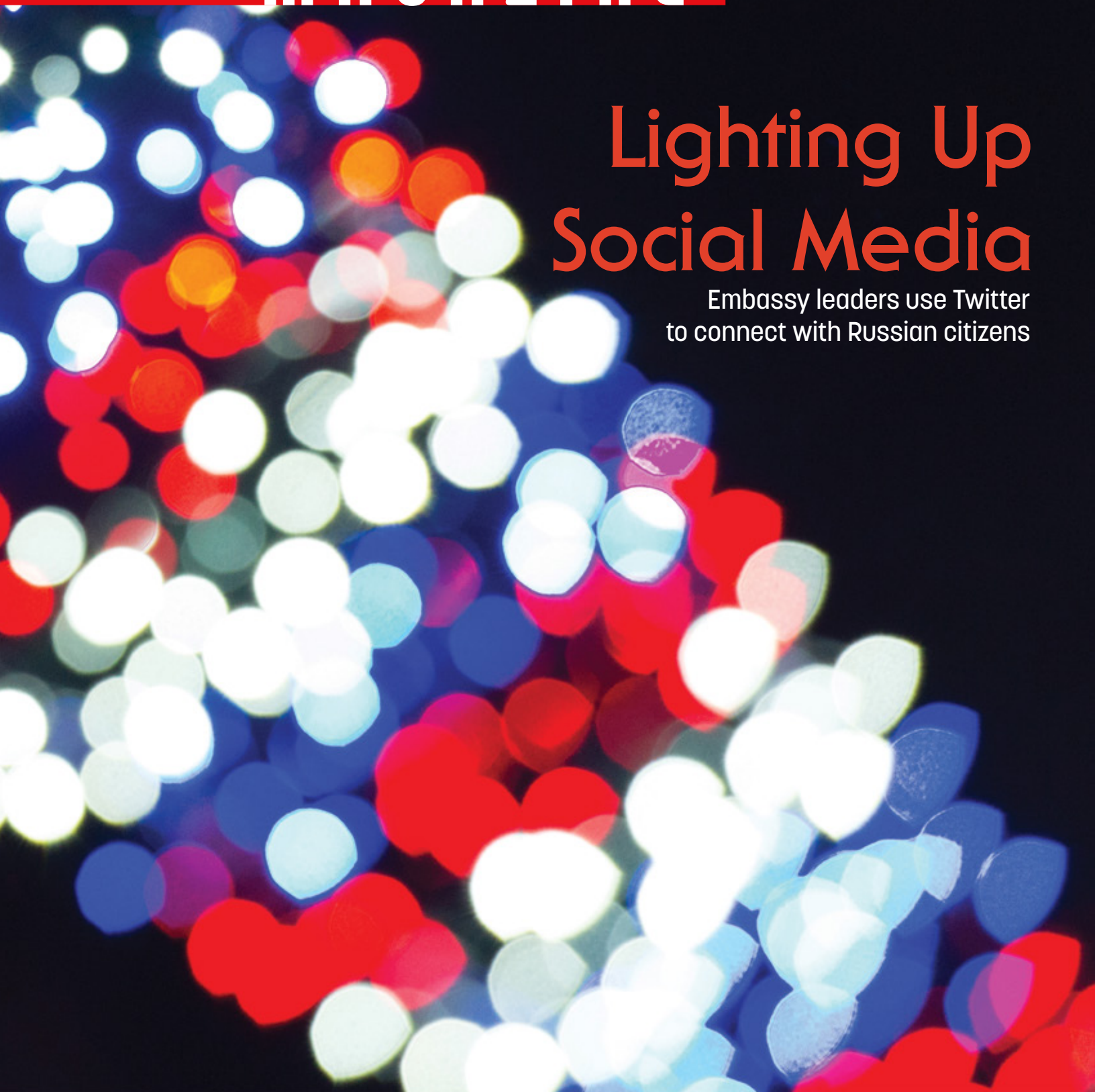
Program in Taiwan immerses students in Chinese language

## Unearthing History

Skopje Staffer helps find downed WWII U.S. Aircraft

# Lighting Up Social Media

Embassy leaders use Twitter  
to connect with Russian citizens







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## On The Cover

*Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco*

# Post One

BY ISAAC D. PACHECO

## A Little Bird Told Me

In past several years, embassies around the world have worked to steadily incorporate social media into their communication strategies, especially when seeking to connect with residents of the countries in which they serve. While this type of digital engagement has become a mainstay of modern diplomacy, it is still fairly uncommon for social media to supplant traditional forms of media as the primary source of information about embassy priorities.

Twitter is only one of myriad tools that public diplomacy professionals employ to communicate policy objectives and engage host country nationals, but posts like the U.S. Embassy in Moscow have capitalized on the uniquely pervasive nature of this particular medium to reach audiences that might not otherwise be exposed to their message through traditional outlets. The interactive nature of social media has also allowed embassies to respond to feedback in a timely manner and counter disinformation propagated by print and television news services in regions where the free press is compromised or nonexistent.

Embassy Moscow is one post that is turning the established communication paradigm on its head, embracing online engagement as a key element in its public outreach campaign. Led by Ambassador Michael McFaul, whose sustained engagement on Twitter is redefining the way Chiefs of Mission conduct outreach, the embassy is taking 21st century diplomacy to the next level. Read more (pg. 14) about how McFaul and the Embassy Moscow team have built a loyal online following by leveraging the power of the social Web in Russia.



While high-speed, high profile digital communication has proven to be an effective method for moving American policy priorities forward in Russia, a more traditional approach was responsible for opening doors in Macedonia recently. When Skopje-based political officer Spencer Fields took on the daunting challenge of locating a WWII-era U.S. B-24 bomber that was believed to have crashed in the mountains near Vratnica in 1944. He relied on face-to-face interactions with locals to help him unravel a 70-year-old mystery.

Fields' passion for history led him to take on the search for the downed aircraft, during which time he interviewed village residents, scoured historical documents and worked with local guides. His exhaustive efforts helped him develop strong relationships in the community and yielded crucial details about the crash that eventually helped him to home in on the bomber's final resting place. Be sure to check out Fields' entire account of the historical find and the additional discoveries he and his team made during their search (pg. 20). ■

Happy Holidays!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Isaac D. Pacheco".

## STATE MAGAZINE

### Editor-in-Chief

Isaac D. Pacheco // [pachecoi2@state.gov](mailto:pachecoi2@state.gov)

### Deputy Editor

Ed Warner // [warneres@state.gov](mailto:warneres@state.gov)

### Associate Editor

Bill Palmer // [palmerwr2@state.gov](mailto:palmerwr2@state.gov)

### Art Director

Peter Ziff // [ziffp@state.gov](mailto:ziffp@state.gov)

### Contacting Us

301 4th Street SW, Room 348  
Washington DC 20547  
[statemagazine@state.gov](mailto:statemagazine@state.gov)  
Phone: (202) 203-7115  
Fax: (202) 203-7142

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# In the News

## PRM Sets Refugee Admissions Record

The number of refugees the United States resettled within its borders in the fiscal year ending September 30 is the size of a medium-sized U.S. town such as Iowa City, Iowa—70,000 people. The number is significant because the United States again resettled more refugees than the rest of the world combined and because the Department's refugee admissions program broke a record, resettling 99.9 percent of the maximum number deemed eligible, based on a number established annually by the president.

In fact, the percentage was its highest since 1980.

"We had a spectacular year," Larry Bartlett, director of Admissions in the Bureau of Population Refugees and Migration (PRM). "It's an extraordinary accomplishment of many people and parts: the PRM Admissions staff, colleagues at other federal and state agencies and the many nonprofits and private sector partners with which we work."

Partners include nongovernmental organizations that help establish refugees in their new communities and American volunteers across the country who offer a warm welcome to new refugees, he said. "The record is a testament to the effective partnership between the public and private sector," he added.

Indeed, PRM worked with 186 communities in 49 states across America. Refugees get a fresh start at life, get jobs, enroll children in school, start small businesses, become taxpayers, engage in civic society and after five years can apply for citizenship. Refugees from 65 countries, the largest numbers coming from Iraq, Burma and Bhutan, were included in the program.



Assistant Secretary Anne C. Richard, right, meets with resettled refugees preparing to take their U.S. citizenship exam in Portland, Ore.

*Photo by C. Getzler Vaughan*

## Office Celebrates Conflict Resolution Week



Among the art created for the event were works by, from left, Sophie Baird and Nicole Frazier.

*Photo by Katherine Manderson*

The office of State Department Ombudsman Shireen Dodson recently showcased the Department's resources for preventing and resolving conflict during Conflict Resolution Week, a federal government-wide initiative Oct. 15-18. The Ombudsman's Office (S/O) events highlighted the conflict management work of S/O and other Department offices. Children from posts abroad sent in artwork addressing the theme of "Making a World of Difference: Bridging People, Perspectives and Positions through Mediation."

At an informal event in the Delegates' Lounge, employees talked with staff from S/O and other offices with roles in conflict management. Brown-bag lunches and morning talks in the Harry S Truman (HST) Building's cafeteria fostered discussion about conflict prevention and resolution. Topics included how reducing stress can positively affect conflict management, presented by a representative of MED's Employee Consultation Service. Dodson spoke on how to give effective feedback.

Dodson said her office, in HST Room 7330, offers services to help prevent or resolve workplace conflict. "We can facilitate conversations between employees, and allow people to safely and openly discuss their differences and work on improving their relationships," she said. "We can help leaders learn to harness the power of conflict and understand that not all conflict is destructive." She said the office offers one-on-one coaching to develop skills for resolving a conflict or looking at a situation from a different viewpoint. "We can also serve as mediators and group facilitators to help staff communicate more effectively and work together toward a resolution," she added.



## New Pavilion to Highlight Diplomacy



A nighttime rendering of the coming U.S. Diplomacy Center glows.  
Image courtesy of Beyer Blinder Belle LLP

The U.S. Diplomacy Center (USDC), a museum and educational resource on the history, practice and challenges of U.S. diplomacy, will soon showcase the work of the Department in a glass pavilion. Located near the 21st Street entrance to Main State, the pavilion will allow visitors to see exhibits without having to enter into Main State itself. Its lower concourse will feature food service, a gift shop and a space for events. It will also offer a venue where Department staff can explain their careers to visitors and docents from the U.S. diplomatic community can offer tours.

The General Services Administration will construct the USDC in two phases. In the first phase, the Pavilion and Hall I will go up. Hall I exhibits will consist of a colorful array of flags, flanked by a map of the world divided by Foreign Service regions. Through interactive stations, visitors can explore how international relations and current issues affect their lives. A video, produced by HBO, will introduce diplomacy, while other interactive areas will encourage learning about the role of the Secretary of State, the work of consular affairs and public diplomacy, and diplomacy's goals to support peace, prosperity, development and democracy.

Next to be built: Hall II, which will feature diplomatic history and tradecraft, and Hall III, an education center for diplomatic simulations and learning (see [diplomacy.state.gov](http://diplomacy.state.gov)). The USDC, which holds monthly briefings on the project at the Ralph Bunche Library, invites Department employees to have their stories included in a major Hall I exhibit titled "I Am a Diplomat," which will emphasize the human face of diplomacy through changing photographic portraits, videos and personal statements. Email [videoop@state.gov](mailto:videoop@state.gov) to learn how to participate.

The USDC continues to seek artifacts that illustrate stories about diplomacy. Contact Priscilla Linn ([linnpr@state.gov](mailto:linnpr@state.gov)) or Katie Speckart ([speckartkg@state.gov](mailto:speckartkg@state.gov)) for more information.

## Best selling Author Speaks at FSI

Attendees who heard Dr. Adam Grant speak in late August at FSI say they "want to be a giver," and others are discussing what being a giver means for their work. Grant, a quiet man in his early 30s, is the author of the best selling book "Give and Take: A Revolutionary Approach to Success." A tenured and highly rated professor at the Wharton School of Business, Grant has been featured on "The Today Show" and in The New York Times, Forbes and Harvard Business Review.

Grant spoke to more than 300 Department professionals on his approach to leadership and success. He said that people who are givers and focus on the interests of others, at times at their own expense, often end up being more successful than takers or "matchers." He said takers have a winner-take-all philosophy and matchers focus only on exchanging favors to balance giving and getting.

"Although some givers get exploited and burn out," he said, "the rest achieve extraordinary results across a wide range of industries." When givers succeed, it creates a ripple effect, with more individuals across the organization succeeding, he said.

Grant believes organizations that foster a culture of giving see higher rates of productivity, efficiency and customer satisfaction, and lower costs and turnover rates. Teams have higher instances of efficient and creative problem solving than individuals, and build cohesive, supportive cultures that appeal to internal and external stakeholders alike.

FSI Director Nancy McElowney said she has "seen Dr. Grant's theories come to life in hundreds of instances. When we focus our efforts on collaborating with and supporting one another, we collectively and individually achieve far greater outcomes. FSI is committed to fostering an organizational culture where giving is the norm."

More information is on Grant's website, [www.giveandtake.com](http://www.giveandtake.com), where users can assess their reciprocity style.



From left, Dr. Marc Ostfeld, FSI deputy director, Dr. Adam Grant and Ambassador Nancy McElowney, FSI director, chat after the presentation.  
Photo by Michael Morrison

# Diversity Notes

JOHN M. ROBINSON  
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

## An Ounce of EEO Prevention for Managers

While managers may not be able to learn all of the numerous, sometimes confusing and constantly changing intricacies of the laws and regulations regarding discrimination and harassment in the workplace, they can take proactive steps to foster a workplace free of discrimination or harassment.

One of the most effective proactive steps is for managers to model their behavior on the behavior the Department expects from all employees. Maintaining professionalism at all times, especially in tense situations, goes a long way in setting a standard for others to follow. Managers should establish the tone of the workplace by speaking courteously and being respectful of others, notwithstanding differences in perspectives and opinions. Managers who take proactive steps to embrace, understand and value the diversity of their teams encourage and inspire employees to model such behavior. Displaying a firm commitment to a professional and inclusive work environment will lead others to act accordingly.

Equally important, managers should promptly and diligently address any conflict in the workplace. While demanding workloads and hectic schedules may tempt managers to favor conflict-avoidance over conflict engagement, such a course may permit unresolved problems to fester. The cyclical nature of the Foreign Service may invite some managers to “wait out a problem” rather than address it directly. Other managers may fear that taking legitimate, proactive management steps to address conflicts will result in complaints or grievances.

However, conflict avoidance may, in some cases, actually lead to a complaint against the Department. A failure to take prompt, corrective action may leave room for a conflict to escalate. As such, managers are wise to promptly consider and respond to issues involving workplace conduct and behavior. Moreover, while the EEO process provides employees with a structured avenue for claims of discriminatory harassment, a manager’s obligation to consider prompt and remedial action exists independent of an employee’s decision to engage the administrative EEO process. According to Department policies, all responsible officials who observe, are informed of or reasonably suspect that sexual or discriminatory harassment has occurred must take immediate appropriate action and report the behavior to S/OCR. Managers who fail to abide by this requirement may be subject to disciplinary action.



In addition to promptly addressing conflict, managers should refrain from engaging in reprisal. Managers should not treat employees differently due to their involvement in the EEO process, and should preserve the confidentiality of the process. A seemingly harmless question such as, “Why did you file a complaint?” or “Why didn’t you just come to me first?” may support an inference of reprisal. Giving an employee the cold shoulder, overly scrutinizing leave requests or discounting employee contributions after their engagement in the EEO process may also be seen as reprisal. Managers should try not to take an allegation of discrimination personally and remember that employees engaged in the EEO process are exercising statutorily protected rights.

I encourage managers to take these proactive measures to help preserve a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. Displaying zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior results in a more productive work environment where employees are able to thrive and fully contribute to the Department’s mission. Please remember that we in the Office of Civil Rights are always available as a resource. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads “John M. Robinson”.



# Retirement Ready?

## Planning is essential for secure future

By John Naland, director, Office of Retirement

With any luck, you will spend longer in retirement than you did in any Department of State assignment, maybe even longer than your entire working career. Preparing for that crucial transition is vital. The following update on current retirement trends provides suggestions on pre-retirement steps you can take to help make your retirement processing go smoothly.

The long-anticipated surge in baby boomer retirements hit foreign affairs agencies starting in late 2010. In the past three years, the Office of Retirement (RET) processed 25 percent more retirements than in the previous three years. Those numbers encompass the Department's Civil Service employees along with Foreign Service members from all U.S. foreign affairs agencies.

Retirement applications processed by RET hit an all-time record of 810 in 2011 but then fell back to just under 700 in both 2012 and 2013. However, applications may rise again in 2014, since that is the first year when employees in the "new" retirement systems (Foreign Service Pension System and Federal Employees Retirement System) will receive full credit in their annuity computation for all unused sick leave.

Some 17 percent of the Department's American workforce is eligible to retire now. In five years, it will be 31 percent. In 10 years, nearly half of the Department's workforce will be eligible to retire. While most employees do not retire as soon as they become eligible, some may depart sooner rather than later if national economic conditions continue to improve or if federal pay continues to be frozen.

Retirement eligibility is highest among experienced, senior-level employees. Their departure will present a leadership succession challenge that will need to be managed during the remainder of this decade.

Another challenge is retirement processing backlogs. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which does the final adjudication of Civil Service retirement applications, recently reported having a 91-day backlog. As a result, new Civil Service retirees must get by on their interim annuity, which average 80 percent of their eventual annuity, while OPM adjudicates their application. OPM aims to cut the processing time to 60 days by March 2014.

Here at the Department, RET has no processing backlog, nor does it initiate interim payments for Foreign Service retirees. Over the past year, RET processed 99 percent of Foreign Service and 85 percent of Civil Service retirement applications on time. OPM's on-time record is 80 percent because many Civil Service employees submit their retirement application at the last minute.

Due to high workload, RET does have a 200-case backlog on processing applications for retirement credit for prior federal service. While that results in a several-month delay, it does not adversely impact employees who initiate the process at least 90 days before retirement.

A 30-person office, RET provides pre- and post-retirement services to 42,500 clients, including 16,000 Foreign Service annuitants, 15,500 active-duty Foreign Service members and 11,000 Civil Service employees. The office works with the Bureau of the Comptroller and Global Financial Services in Charleston, S.C., which generates nearly \$900 million a year in annuity payments drawn from the \$17.5 billion Foreign Service retirement fund.

## Key Steps

### Do your homework

Comprehensive Foreign Service and Civil Service retirement information is available on HR Online's Employee Benefits Information System site. EBIS has information and videos of seminars on retirement benefits, financial planning and related topics, and can generate an individualized estimate of annuity benefits. Foreign Service retirement information is also available at RNet.state.gov, which includes a database of 300 frequently asked questions. At least five years prior to retirement, employees should attend a Foreign Service Institute retirement planning seminar to hear presentations on key retirement topics.

### Resolve prior service issues

Employees with prior federal civilian or military service can increase their retirement annuity by obtaining credit for that service. This usually requires making a deposit to cover the employee retirement contributions (plus interest) not made originally. Resolving prior service issues often requires obtaining information from the prior employer, which can take a month or more.

### Review any divorce decrees

Divorce decrees and property settlement agreements can affect the division of retirement benefits. Sometimes, the order issued by a state court fails to meet federal standards, or one party in the divorce will dispute an order. Then, the parties may have to return to state court. To check for such problems, Foreign Service employees should send a copy of any divorce decrees and property settlement agreements to RET for review (HRSC@state.gov).

### Apply on time

Employees who want to receive their first annuity check on time should submit their completed retirement applications to RET at least 90 days before their retirement date. Meeting that deadline is a prerequisite for taking FSI's pre-retirement Job Search Program. American employees must submit their applications electronically via EBIS.

Employees who are within five years of retirement should begin planning now in order to set themselves up for smooth retirement processing.

One final note of importance to all employees: Every year, there are sad cases of death benefits not being paid to the immediate next of kin because the employee did not update his or her beneficiary designations after a marriage, divorce or other relationship change. Check your eOPF now to make sure that your beneficiary forms reflect your current wishes. The forms involved are those for retirement benefits (DS-5002 for Foreign Service, SF-3102 for FERS, SF-2808 for CSRS), Federal Employees Government Life Insurance (SF-2823) and unpaid compensation (SF-1152). If any need updating, submit them to HRSC@state.gov. Also check your annual TSP account statement to confirm your TSP-3 beneficiary designation. If needed, submit a new TSP-3 to TSP as explained on the form. ■



# History at Hand

## Ex-FSO was at Dr. King's side before march

By Tiffany Cabrera, historian, Office of the Historian

One week before the 50th commemoration of the 1963 March on Washington, a diverse crowd of Department employees assembled in the George C. Marshall Auditorium to screen a film sponsored by the American Foreign Service Association and American Federation of Government Employees. The recently restored film, produced in 1964 by the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), documented the march and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech there. Afterward, when the microphones were opened for audience comments, a white man in his mid-60s approached, and emotionally told the room of a life's work for social justice.

That man, Peter Kovach, now a WAE employee of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, was at the march as a staff assistant to Dr. King, having accompanied King and his entourage to Washington from their base in Atlanta. He was with Dr. King at the Willard Hotel as the civil rights leader

put the finishing touches on the speech he would deliver from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Kovach, who retired as a Senior Foreign Service officer after 30 years, can trace his commitment to civil rights to an early age. "My parents had a very strong sense of justice," he said. "Ethics was a very big part of my upbringing."

In the early 1950s, his family moved from New England to Cincinnati, Ohio, which was still partly segregated. However, Kovach attended an integrated school that was 60 percent African-American. Every day during the spring, he and his African-American friends rode their pump scooters, pushing the neighborhood boundaries (enforced by their mothers) outward block by block. When the segregated Cincinnati Zoo turned his friends away, Kovach was incensed. "I just lost it," he recalled. "I was screaming epithets at the guy—'bigot!'—all these things I had heard from my parents, who

weren't comfortable with the racial situation in that area."

The altercation left Kovach deeply troubled. His family eventually returned to his hometown of Lexington, Mass.

During the Woolworth's lunch counter sit-ins and boycotts of 1960, Kovach became the student organizer of the daily picketing in front of the local Woolworth's that lasted two years. In his senior year of high school, Kovach lobbied to defend an African-American woman's winning entry in a statewide essay contest sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution. He prevailed and the prize was justly awarded.

Kovach describes himself as a Kennedy-generation Massachusetts kid who believed in the "Don't ask what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country" imperative. He attended Wesleyan University, spending summers mowing lawns and sweeping pools. Wanderlust drove him west, to a dude ranch in Yellowstone



National Park where he washed dishes. He befriended Harry Boyte, a Southern track star who made national headlines for refusing to run in the state track meet unless it was integrated.

"Here we are, these two justice fighters at the dude ranch, corrupting the local staff," Kovach said with a laugh. "We both got fired; I got fired for being a bad influence and for being a bad dishwasher."

Kovach and Boyte set off on an odyssey through the West, eventually landing in San Francisco. They found temporary shelter on a defunct 40-foot catamaran that had been used to protest nuclear tests, but was no longer needed once the United States and Soviet Union signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963. That summer, Boyte's father, Harry Boyte Sr., special assistant to Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC's) first white employee, called his son home to help with the impending March on Washington. Kovach joined his friend in Atlanta, where they worked for SCLC during the month before the march.

"It was generally grunt work, I'm not going to glorify it; we were a couple of 17-year-old hotheads," Kovach recalled. They

joined the caravan of cars and buses up to Washington in late August—Kovach with a huge "We Shall Overcome" poster affixed to his Nash Rambler. "Luckily, we got up to Washington in one piece," he said.

The night before the march, Kovach was with Dr. King "from about 2 in the morning until about 5. I was answering the phone and running errands for him. He was piecing together parts of his rhetoric from other speeches to make the 'I Have a Dream' speech."

March leaders A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin came into the room and spoke with Dr. King about their worries of potential violence. "Dr. King, in that very steely quality he had, said 'Look, we've been practicing nonviolence, we've been practicing this loving method ... I'm just going to have to assume it has caught on, because that's our only defense. There's no turning back now,'" Kovach recalled.

He returned to his studies that fall, and in 1968 made his way back west to the University of California at Berkeley to obtain a masters degree in Asian Studies. He studied Sanskrit, Hindi and Urdu, as well as Arabic script. Following graduate school, he married, then moved to Japan to teach English,

including a stint at Japan's Foreign Ministry Institute. Kovach traveled throughout East and Southeast Asia in the early 1970s, with adventures in Thailand and Laos. He fell in with a group of French travelers, crossed into Laos in a canoe and got "delightfully stranded" there for a month when the Mekong River flooded. "I would go up and sit in a cave with a Buddhist monk who spoke some English every day to do some meditation," he said. "We just had the time of our lives, except we were stranded."

The Laotian Air Force evacuated Kovach and his friends to the Plain of Jars, a key area in the fighting between the Communist Pathet Lao and Laotian royalists. Left to negotiate their way to Vientiane, they were helped by hospitable locals as firefights erupted around them.

Kovach joined the Foreign Service in 1980 and was posted to Yemen as a junior officer trainee with USIA. He followed that with tours in Bahrain, Morocco, Jordan, Japan and Pakistan.

He has provided an oral history of his experiences to the Office of the Historian's Oral History Program, recollections that will go to the National Archives and be made available to researchers. ■



**Opposite:** Kovach smokes a pipe while sitting in an old building at overseas post. *Photo by David R. Ballou* **Left:** Kovach poses for a portrait with his wife and son. *Photo courtesy of Peter Kovach* **Above:** Kovach and his first wife chat on set with Professor Kiyotada Tazaki, with whom they starred in a Japan Broadcasting Company (NHK) Television series that taught American English. *Photo by NHK*

# Cooking Lessons

Wife's tale recalls postwar FS life

By Nancy Keeney Forster

In September 1949, my husband, Cliff, was a newly minted Foreign Service officer, assigned to launch the U.S. Information Service (USIS) center in Davao on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. My job was to morph from a 20-year-old college-co-ed-turned-wife into someone who could cook and serve as hostess to a constant stream of visitors.

"Nancy, this was a fine dinner, but could we have something different tomorrow?" Cliff asked after 14 nights of corned beef hash, canned spinach and the canned peaches my father had added to our household shipment. But my choices were limited: The only meat in the open-air market where I shopped was water buffalo or live chickens and the vegetables were parasite-ridden.

Fortunately, a tattooed veteran of Merchant Marine kitchens named Dan came into Cliff's office the next day and said he could cook and even serenade us on his guitar as we ate.

Thus began my culinary education, the texts being housekeeping magazines from the USIS library and my tutor being Dan, who would read and execute the recipes I had copied.

Our major public debut occurred when a planeload of VIPs from Manila, including the American ambassador, vice president of the Philippines and New York Times reporter Tillman Durden arrived to officially open Mindanao's newly remodeled USIS Center. In our home above a Lutheran missionary's quarters, I served dry martinis and soft drinks, chicken curry with condiments and rice, tomato aspic salad, rum lime sherbet and pineapple bars.

Rains the previous night had flooded our front yard and the power was out, so 2x6 planks laid across the larger puddles served as a bridge to bring arriving guests from the street to our door. With no power, the frozen dessert and jelled aspic became liquid, so guests drank their salad and dessert courses. Dan was ecstatic when the ambassador took a second helping.

Durden, meanwhile, sequestered himself in our bedroom to write his story, regularly sticking his head out to request another martini.

In 1953, we began a series of Japanese postings which took us to Shikoku, Kyushu, Kobe and Tokyo for 15 of the next 30 years.

As the number of guests coming to our various homes grew, I discovered a lifelong hobby in cooking. In Fukuoka, a group of Japanese wives, disappointed that their husbands deemed them too unsophisticated to attend our parties, invited the wives of U.S. Consulate staff to come to their homes to learn basic Japanese cooking. This began a series of Japanese-American female cultural exchanges, and soon the Japanese husbands were bringing their wives to our parties.

In Kobe and our next post, Rangoon, I was asked to take the next step in my culinary journey—to teach American cooking. In Rangoon, I told my students that it was hard for people like me to acquire cooking secrets in traditional cultures where mothers taught their daughters to use a handful of this and a pinch of that. So they brought me a special gift: a cookbook in which they had carefully measured their traditional recipes' ingredients, written the recipes out with instructions and assembled them into a collection of Burmese, Indian and Pakistani favorites.

In Japan and Burma, I had skilled kitchen help who could transfer my menus and recipes into inviting repasts. But in Israel, where



Above: The author in Hawaii reads notes on the first draft of her cookbook.

Photo by Harold Mason

Opposite Top: Conducting a cooking demonstration at the USIS Center in Fukuoka, Japan, in 1954 are, standing from left, the author, a local translator and Betty Martin, the consul's wife. Opposite Right: The author makes Christmas cookies with two grandchildren at her home in California in 1995. They used recipes from a book she received at the 1961 baby shower for her son.

Photos courtesy of Nancy Keeney Forster





household servants were rare, my “extra hands” were those of our daughter and the guests who pitched in, such as opera star Beverly Sills. At a reception in her honor, she grabbed a plate of appetizers and began serving them to other guests, even as her teenage daughter joined our daughter on kitchen duty.

In all my cooking, I took special care to avoid pork and other foods that are unacceptable to certain cultures or religions. But one night, as I was preparing a favorite dish for some special Israeli friends, I heard the wife react in what I took to be horror when she smelled bacon. Dismayed, I realized I was basting the roasting game hens with my usual strip of bacon draped over the breast. I rushed toward the kitchen for a substitute, but she stopped me. “No, no; don’t do that,” she said. “We loved to eat bacon when we were stationed in the U.S. and miss it terribly.”

Often there were unscripted circumstances. While temporarily living in the Arab quarter of Jerusalem near the Western Wall that is sacred to Jews, we invited about 30 guests, Arab and Israeli, for a rooftop luncheon on Good Friday, the very day Christians would be walking in religious processions on our narrow street, the Via Dolorosa, which everyone watched from our rooftop terrace.

During our final years in Japan, 1977 to 1981, we lived in a large embassy residence. Twice a year, Cliff, as chairman of Japan’s Fulbright Commission, and I needed to entertain about 200 people at reception for departing or returning scholars. Daunted at first, I fell happily into the rhythm of working out a menu, but I always let the caterer take care of the drinks and let our cook do her magic in the kitchen.

While in Japan, my biggest challenge as a hostess was the seated dinner for 36 held to honor the former publisher of *Sunset Magazine*, who’d been U.S. ambassador to the Ocean Expo in Okinawa a few years earlier. The list of guests defied all possible protocol seating arrangements, so I got around the problem by passing out seashells before dinner. Guests found their matching shells at the dinner table, men and women alternating. It was a memorable and relaxed evening.

After Cliff retired in 1983, we moved to Hawaii and then California. When Cliff died in 2006, he was working on a biography of the Japanese general who had led the conquest of the Philippines

and been responsible for Cliff’s internment in a POW camp as a teenager.

During our time together, we always enjoyed congenial meals with friends and family—and my recipe collection grew. Looking through these recipes, I decided it would be fun to combine favorites into a book featuring menus for events large and small, official and personal. The book would also hold stories of where, when and how each recipe was used.

In February, *A Culinary Journey: Recipes and Reminiscences of an American Diplomat’s Wife* was published. Book sales have been steady, and readers tell me they enjoy the variety of recipes and stories. In May, the book received an Eric Hoffer Award for excellence in independent publishing. It is available through Amazon or, autographed, from me at [midpacific@igc.org](mailto:midpacific@igc.org).

Were Dan the Merchant Mariner still around, I’d have thanked him for helping give me my start. ■







美國在台協會 華語學校 全體師生2013畢業合照

# *New China Hands*

## CLASS program meets language needs

By John M. Grondelski, Nonimmigrant Visa Unit chief, U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai and 2012-13 CLASS student

America's increased emphasis on China and the explosion in Chinese visa applications have increased the demand for Chinese-language speakers among Foreign Service officers. Chinese is considered a "super-hard" language, requiring two years of intensive study to acquire professional proficiency. Year one takes place at FSI, followed by a nearly yearlong immersion at overseas field schools or regional programs.

For students headed to posts on the Chinese mainland other than the U.S. Embassy in Beijing or to the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), this immersion usually takes place at the Chinese Language and Area Studies School (CLASS) in Taipei, Taiwan.

Part of AIT, the nonprofit, private corporation Congress established to continue relations with Taiwan after U.S. recognition of the Peoples' Republic of China in 1979, CLASS Taipei offers a second year of training in Mandarin (and, for a few, Taiwanese or beyond-level-3 Mandarin) in a Chinese-speaking environment. It's a real commitment, for the officer and the Department, to dedicate two years to language training. As Guangzhou Consular Officer Richard Rosenman put it: "It's nice to be a part of an organization that understands the value of language training and invests in its people."

CLASS sits atop Yangmingshan Mountain overlooking Taipei, literally on the doorstep of Yangmingshan National Park—and a world apart from the rest of AIT, which is located downtown. That will change in the next few years, when AIT Taipei's new office compound, which will also provide space for CLASS language instruction, is completed. CLASS's current facilities date from the 1950s, and time has taken its toll on the physical plant.

New students, mostly mid-level FSOs, typically arrive in early August to get settled and place children in school. By mid-August, they're in a daily whirlwind of five to six hours of classroom speaking and reading Chinese, followed by homework. Classes are generally small (two or three officers at most), allowing students to be grouped by appropriate level as well as ensuring individualized attention.

CLASS teachers are experienced: Direct-hires have an average of

11 years of teaching experience and contractors have five. The senior teacher has been working with State Department students since 1981.

"The entire team at CLASS was fully committed to our success," said Walter Andonov, now a Guangzhou political officer. "The teachers and staff spent countless hours working with us, both inside and outside the classroom. This extra effort helped me become a stronger speaker and reader, something I greatly appreciated during my time in Taipei."

A typical day includes two to three hours of speaking, including impromptu conversation or speaking at length on topics as diverse as political developments and human rights, trade and commerce, and environmental protection. There's also an hour-long, large-group class in general grammar and two to three hours spent reading articles; students start with abridged news stories and progress to opinion pieces. That schedule continues for four 10-week quarters, culminating (usually in June) in the final language proficiency examination administered by an FSI-designated and certified language examiner.

Beyond the classroom, CLASS offers a range of opportunities for students to interact with native speakers. During the Christmas-New Year break, students organize practicum classes in communities on Taiwan and the Mainland. In the spring, CLASS works with local universities to bring together students and area experts for week-long, Chinese-only seminars on topics ranging from human rights to traditional dance. Throughout the year, students can also pair up with a local family for conversation and cultural exchange. The contacts range from university students and professors to leading cardiologists.

"In the language partner program," said Chengdu Economic Unit Chief John Corrao, "I met regularly with a local Taiwan grad student to discuss topics we did not normally discuss in class, including the different kinds of Taiwan 'baijiu' (a strong Chinese clear liquor)—where they come from and how they are used. Our host family showed us the best local hot springs and karaoke—information you don't get in a classroom."





Students who just can't get enough Chinese language can get additional training at local language schools, "after CLASS."

Not that it's all work and no play. Taiwan is a great place for singles and families. A bustling yet safe city, Taipei has a low crime rate, plentiful taxis and public transportation, and delicious food on every corner. CLASS Principal Chris Crocoll doesn't mind too much if students don't go straight home and study. "If you're getting out and using your Chinese, that's what you're here for," he said. "And if you're not getting out, your Chinese probably isn't going to be that good."

Most singles and couples are housed in apartments in downtown Taipei (CLASS operates a shuttle service), offering easy access to life in Taipei. Families with children are often housed in ranch-style houses atop Yangmingshan. Their children often attend Taipei American School, a rigorous college preparatory school with classes from pre-K to grade 12. Taipei European School is the other major alternative for AIT and CLASS families.

CLASS students and their families enjoy hiking in Yangmingshan National Park, water sports at nearby beaches and great food and shopping in Taiwan's traditional night markets. There are all manner of restaurants, snack bars and street vendors. "Taiwan offers a wide variety cultural and adventure outings for any FSO," noted Shanghai Political Officer Bill Duff.

Coming in contact with Chinese culture in a democratic and free environment provides a broad perspective on Chinese culture, America's interests in East Asia and cross-strait relations. That background is invaluable, especially for officers proceeding to Mainland postings.

Bidding on a Chinese-language post can be a wise career move. "America's interests in East Asia will continue to grow, so learning Chinese definitely is in the interest of the Service," said AIT Director Christopher Marut, a "China hand" for more than 30 years.

China is "a demanding commitment," added Crocoll, "but one worthwhile for American diplomacy and your career. And Taiwan is a great place to be."

"It's not an easy program," agreed Shenyang Consul General Scott Weinhold, "but it's a great privilege for our officers to have the opportunity to focus on a year of advanced Chinese-language learning with outstanding teachers and world-class teaching materials in a full-immersion environment." ■



**Opposite:** CLASS students are all smiles in their official May 2013 graduation photo. *Photo courtesy CLASS; Top:* CLASS student Walter Andonov, of the U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou, prepares to order a snack as part of the program's effort to have students use their language skills locally. *Photo by David K. Brown; Bottom:* Greg Geerdes, now at Embassy Beijing, tries his hand at traditional Chinese pottery making during a CLASS cultural expedition. *Photo by Chris Crocoll*



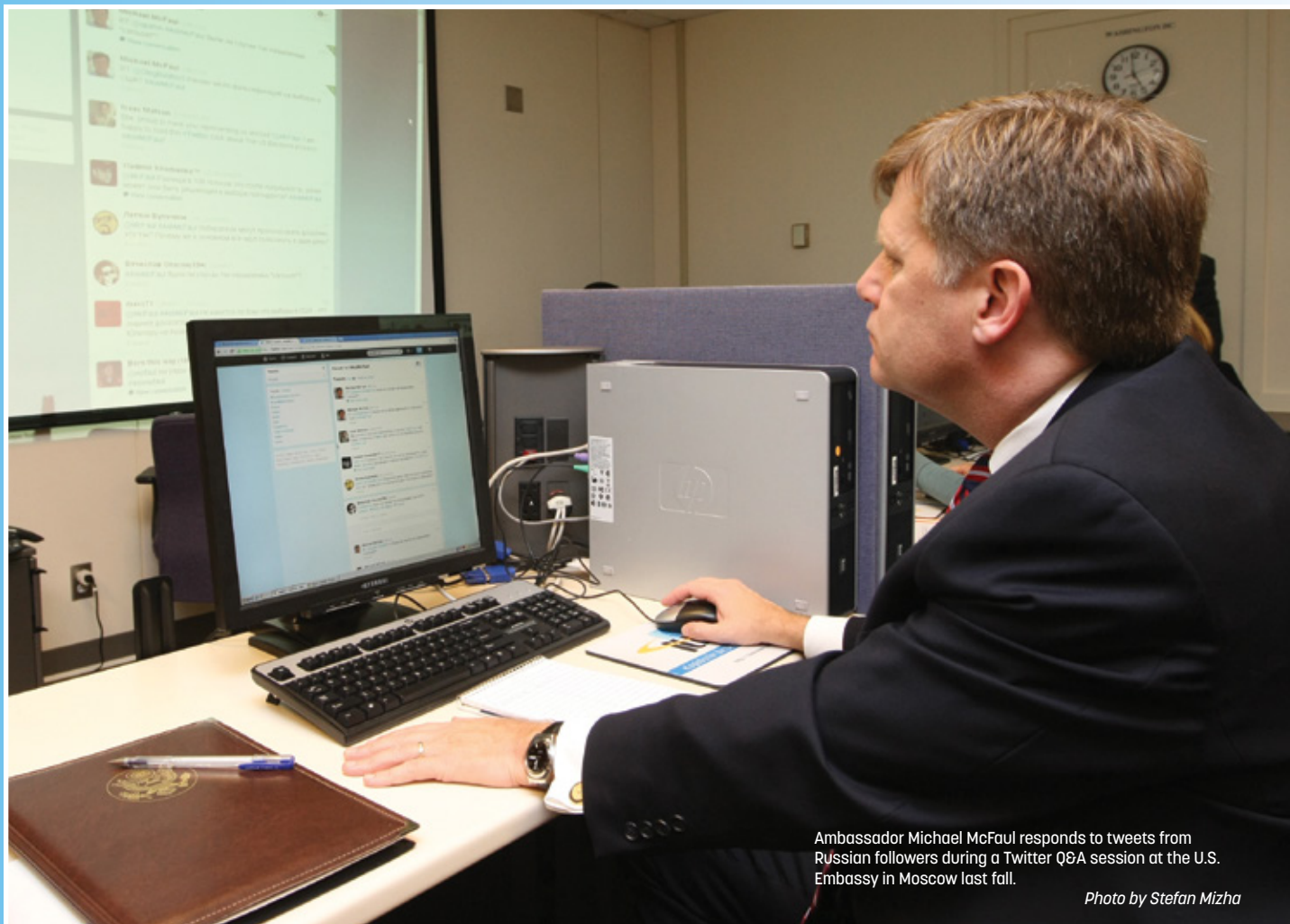


# ***Tweet-errific***

**Ambassador, embassy adept at social media**

By Robert L. Koenig, assistant information officer,  
U.S. Embassy in Moscow





Ambassador Michael McFaul responds to tweets from Russian followers during a Twitter Q&A session at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow last fall.

Photo by Stefan Mizha

When he first arrived as U.S. ambassador to Russia in January 2012, Michael McFaul had never seen a tweet, had no experience blogging and seldom used Facebook.

Less than two years later, McFaul has more than 55,000 Twitter followers. A Russian rating agency has ranked him as one of the country's most quoted bloggers. Foreign Policy magazine lists him in its "Twitterati 100" as one of the top 10 politicians and diplomats to follow "to make sense of global events." And his Facebook page has more than 13,000 friends or subscribers.

By embracing social media as an essential tool of public diplomacy, McFaul has applied the cutting-edge communication techniques of President Barack Obama's administration to the challenging public opinion landscape of Russia. Then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged McFaul—a Stanford University professor who was posted to Moscow after serving as the National Security Council's top expert on Russia—to communicate directly with the people, not just with Kremlin officials.

McFaul, who championed the administration's "reset" policy, set out to project a clear and unfiltered U.S. voice into a news landscape dominated by government-controlled media. Many Russians, skeptical about biased broadcast news, now rely on the Internet, Twitter, Facebook and blogs for the real story.

"Social media is a lightning-fast way to get out information, correct the record and engage Russians," said McFaul, whose most popular tweets reach an estimated half million people. "Many of my tweets are picked up by print and broadcast media, bypassing the need for formal press events."

Shortly after his arrival in Moscow, McFaul, only the second non-career diplomat in three decades to serve as U.S. ambassador to Russia, worked with his public affairs staff to revamp the embassy's social media strategy. What was once a sleepy Twitter page now tweets numerous times a day, aiming at peak readership hours and responding to Russian news coverage or government statements on key policy issues.

This year, McFaul and the embassy have faced a series of public diplomacy challenges, including Russia's granting of asylum to Edward Snowden, White House cancellation of a planned Moscow summit, U.S.-Russian disagreements on responding to Syria's chemical weapons attack and prominent human rights cases in Russia. Social media figured prominently in the public diplomacy strategies for each.

For example, when a court convicted Moscow reform politician Alexi Navalny on questionable charges of embezzlement in July, McFaul immediately tweeted in Russian and English, saying, "We are deeply disappointed" by the "apparent political motivations in this trial." That got a huge response, including 950 re-tweets, and was widely quoted in the media. On another high-profile issue, the harsh sentencing of the Pussy Riot punk-rock performers in 2012, McFaul's criticism was also widely re-tweeted and quoted.

"The goal is to get our voice into the first round of news stories about major developments," said embassy Press Attaché Joseph Kruzich, who sees social media as a significant advancement over using press releases or news conferences. The latter strategies are slower, and often result in late coverage in the Russian media, he said.



## Ambassador McFaul's Tips on Tweeting

- Tweet several times a day, or more often when “live-tweeting” major events.
- Schedule tweets for peak times: 9-11 p.m., 5-6 p.m., mid-afternoon, mid-morning.
- Space tweets, when possible, posting no more than one per hour.
- Prioritize host-language tweets, but tweet in English when appropriate.
- Reply to tweets when feasible and constructive.
- Re-tweet selectively, but regularly.
- Supplement the tweet’s text with either a photo or a longer link.
- Save photos posted on Twitter on a shared drive.
- Remember to save enough characters for the photo or link.
- In personal Twitter accounts, mix in anecdotes and comments.
- Link to ambassador and embassy social media accounts on the embassy website.



However, Kruzich and McFaul both emphasize that social media is a supplement, not a substitute, for face-to-face diplomacy and other aspects of traditional public diplomacy.

McFaul, who speaks Russian well, sends out most of his tweets, many of his Facebook posts and all of his blog posts in Russian. His occasional grammar mistakes lend authenticity to his posts, his followers have told him. The embassy’s site has followed McFaul’s example, translating almost all tweets but also posting some in English.

Even though he is a strong advocate for social media platforms as important tools of public diplomacy, McFaul cautions that there are limitations. “Finding the correct balance between personal and professional matters is one of the toughest challenges to using these new tools effectively,” he said, noting that he’ll tweet on occasion about Stanford sports, his family or his tastes in music.

“The lines between public and private are often blurred in social media,” he said. “But there is no question that personal information generates the most ‘likes’ on Facebook and questions from Twitter followers.” For example, McFaul’s comments about his personal travel always spark considerable interest.

McFaul and the embassy deploy blogs, Facebook and Instagram in different ways, depending on their focus. For instance, Facebook is best for “soft diplomacy” rather than for broadcasting policy-related themes that are more appropriate for longer blogs linked to tweets.

When one of his comments or an administration policy ruffles feathers in the Kremlin, McFaul often turns to his LiveJournal blog, <http://m-mcfaul.livejournal.com/>, to explain or expand on the issues. While the LiveJournal platform is not widely used in the United States, it’s popular in Russia, with an estimated 5.7 million users.

When the Russian foreign affairs ministry (MFA) turned to its Twitter account to take issue with a McFaul comment in 2012, the ambassador explained on his blog that he had intended his comments, made at Moscow’s Higher School of Economics, to highlight the progress made in U.S.-Russian relations.

After that exchange, Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt—another member of FP’s “Twitterati 100”—tweeted to say MFA had “launched a Twitter war” against McFaul. Wrote Bildt: “That’s the new world—followers instead of nukes. Better.”

When Russia’s parliament banned U.S. adoptions of Russian orphans, the ambassador entered the fray with a February 2012 blog posting defending the American system of child-rearing and adoptions. That garnered news coverage and sparked a great deal of chatter in Russian social media.

“Given how many misperceptions [there are] about our administration’s policies and about life in the U.S., it’s important to give Russians a more direct, accurate picture,” said McFaul.

“Although it is sometimes hard to communicate in proper diplomatic language in 140 characters, interaction on these social media platforms is an excellent way to connect directly with Russians.” ■



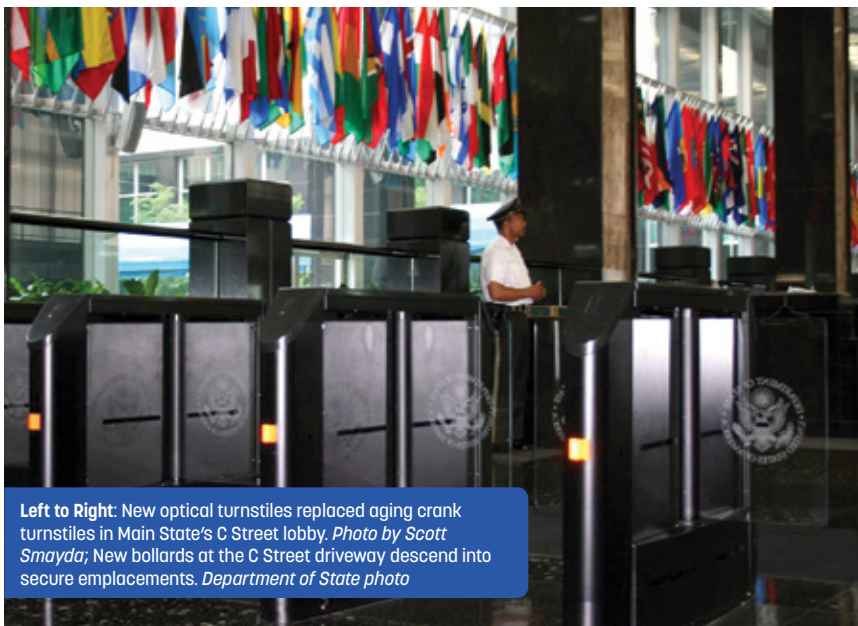
**Top:** The chancery of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow was dedicated in June 2000 and houses a permanent collection of contemporary American art.

*Photo by Alexander Fursov*

**Left:** Ambassador McFaul speaks with young Russian bloggers and social media leaders at a June 2013 roundtable meeting at his Moscow residence.

*Photo by Vitaly Ragulin*





**Left to Right:** New optical turnstiles replaced aging crank turnstiles in Main State's C Street lobby. *Photo by Scott Smayda*; New bollards at the C Street driveway descend into secure emplacements. *Department of State photo*



# Security with Style

## Diplomatic Security upgrades HST entry points

By Kevin Casey, writer, Bureau of Diplomatic Security Office of Public Affairs

Not long ago, passing through the lobby at the Harry S Truman (HST) Building meant pushing through an old, three-armed crank turnstile. Sleek newer models, however, have now been installed, and these optical turnstiles, with their glass doors emblazoned with the State Department symbol, also boost physical security by admitting only properly identified Department personnel.

Aesthetics were part of the reason for the upgrade, but the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) technicians who maintain these systems also note the old turnstiles were prone to breaking and were so out of date it was impossible to find parts. Instead, DS had replacement parts manufactured from scratch. The new turnstiles offer low-cost maintenance and a long life cycle and can accept biometrics as part of the screening process, if the Department decides to install this.

To maintain the lobby's decorum, the noisy and dirty replacement work was handled in the evening and overnight. The work required that the marble at the base of the old turnstiles be dislodged. The dust created in the process was sucked out of the building in order to protect the famous C Street lobby flags.

When the new access control units were installed, they were planted in fresh marble that was so close in appearance to the original that it was approved by the State Department architect.

The work was overseen by the Domestic Management and Engineering (DME) branch of the Countermeasures Directorate as part of an ongoing effort to upgrade and maintain automated access control points, intrusion detection systems, closed-circuit television networks and barriers at domestic Department facilities.

New security installation requests come from Physical Security Program's Facility Security Division (FSD), which like DME is overseen by the Countermeasures Directorate. "FSD has a really good sense of our capabilities and some of the obstacles we have to overcome. They have always been very supportive," said DME Branch Chief Ray Rivera.

Bollards, barriers and similar devices are engineered to meet standards set by the Countermeasures Directorate's Physical Security Programs. "It's our job to confirm it, engineer it, oversee its installation and ultimately maintain it," Rivera said.

The shiny metal bollards that sink into the ground when vehicles seek access to the circular drive at the C Street entrance were also replaced as part of the upgrade. Stakeholders had aesthetic concerns regarding the bollard replacement, as well, and DME agreed to lay new concrete throughout the circular drive so it would remain uniform after the bollard work was completed. Even the temporary walls that were erected to keep the area safe during the work had to be painted to match HST's façade.

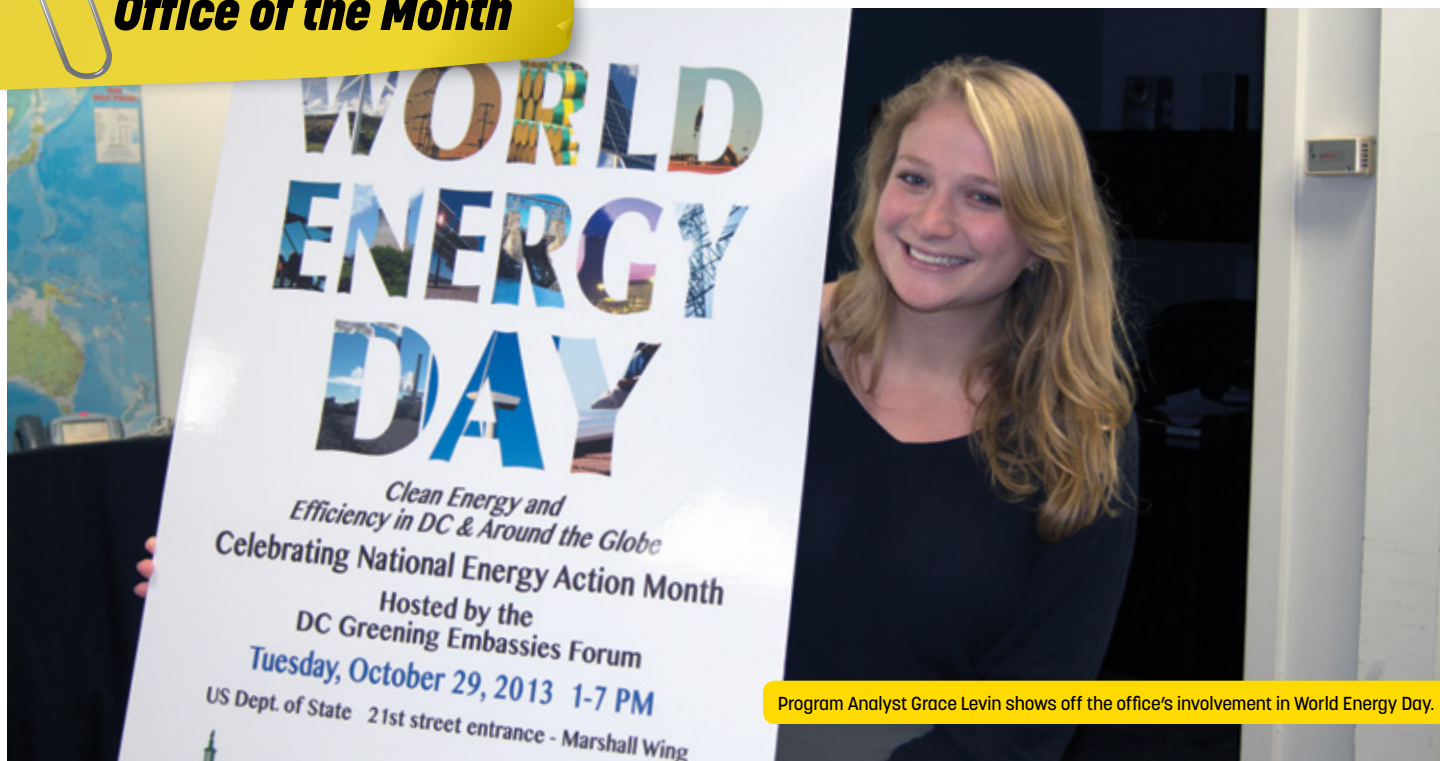
DME also upgraded parts of the HST security gates at either end of C Street, getting the job done in one weekend, as requested, to minimize disruption. Even something as simple as the arm that rises to allow cars access to parking under HST was improved by adding red lights, thus helping to prevent drivers from inadvertently ramming the arms in the dark.

Many of the systems DME maintains are supported by the Department's IT infrastructure. When you slip your card into an automated access control device, the device confirms in the database your approval to access that space. If an intruder forces open a door at the passport office in San Francisco, for instance, an alarm goes off in Washington, D.C.

When considering which new entry devices to use in the C Street lobby, Rivera said, "We included all of the concerned parties throughout the process, and that gave us a lot of credibility. So now when we go back and say we would like to upgrade something, we have established a relationship with all of the stakeholders."

With a budget of \$8.7 million, DME designs, implements, maintains and manages a large number of technical security systems at all domestic facilities. Because these systems are remotely monitored, a large portion of DME functions includes sophisticated information technology.

Rivera oversees a 70-person team of engineers, technicians, programmers and logistics and administrative professionals. DS gave him a Superior Honor Award in March for what DS said was "innovation, cross-bureau collaboration and diligence" and his leadership of the upgrade. ■



# Efficiency Advocates

## M/PRI seeks best approach through dialog

By A. John Janek III, management analyst, Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing and Innovation  
Photos by Ed Warner

The Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing and Innovation (M/PRI) focuses on nurturing management excellence across the Department, which includes finding ways to reduce taskings to the field.

M/PRI, led by Director Alaina Teplitz, establishes and maintains a dialog between offices in the field and in Washington, and between offices within the Bureau of Management or in other Department units (where management issues intersect), or even in the interagency arena. M/PRI seeks solutions, improved performance and a strengthened diplomatic platform.

M/PRI started as Management Operations, had a short stint in the Bureau of Finance and Management Policy as FMP/MP and later became M/P or Management Policy. Then, Congress passed rightsizing legislation, leading to a separate office called Management Rightsizing or M/R. In the meantime, the Bureau of Administration established what became the Office of Global Support Services and Innovation. In 2007, these three offices merged to form M/PRI, a powerhouse of collaboration, analysis, strategic thinking and policy development.

Its three units—Policy, Rightsizing and Innovation—staffed by Civil Service, Foreign Service and other employees, do such work as producing guidance for Department operations during a lapse in appropriations, engaging in proactive quality management and behind-the-scenes improvement of knowledge management, and conducting congressionally mandated rightsizing analyses.

Often, M/PRI pulls from all three units to tackle tough problems. For example, the Enterprise Data Quality Initiative (EDQI) promotes data quality by improving, normalizing and connecting data between big information management systems, and using that data to drive decisions. According to Chris Hanson, EDQI coordinator, the initial steps in this effort involve such action as standardizing everyday data,

for example, how to spell the names of posts and countries. Broader results lie ahead, such as eliminating the need to transfer email accounts when an employee changes posts.

“As the pieces fall into place over the next two years,” Hanson said, “EDQI promises to work to eliminate unnecessary data duplication and create the framework to promote efficiencies. For those overseas, it means information systems that talk to each other, reducing the need to re-enter data and providing better and more standardized data.”

In M/PRI’s Policy unit, under Managing Director Susan Curley, staff members often play the role of honest broker, analyzing the equities, domestic and overseas, before a matter is presented to the Under Secretary for Management for decision. Competing interests of many bureaus and offices must be fairly represented and harmonized into a viable proposal.

Policy also supports some of the Department’s most challenging and high-profile activities, often working behind the scenes to provide information. These activities include chairing the ICASS Executive Board, leading the Information Sharing with Foreign Partners effort, developing the Department’s leadership and management principles, and analyzing action for the Department of State/USAID Joint Management Board.

For those overseas, M/PRI’s Rightsizing unit, led by Virginia Keener, is perhaps the office’s most visible part. The congressionally mandated rightsizing reviews allow for a holistic view of the Department’s overseas presence and staffing.

“Rightsizing works with posts and the regional bureaus to evaluate current staffing and develop five-year staffing projections to ensure staff levels overseas align with policy priorities and support requirements, while still mindful of security realities and other constraints,” said Tim Hanway, a Rightsizing analyst. “The unit’s work with the Department



and the rest of the foreign affairs community raises the level of awareness and translates the key requirements of overseas staffing into larger resource plans.”

Rightsizing also houses the Department’s expert on Chief of Mission Authority. Working with colleagues across the federal government, including the Department of Defense and congressional offices, the unit works to ensure an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and authority of the Chief of Mission. This effort is connected to the field by the National Security Decision Directive 38 team. Responsible for processing and tracking mandated Chief of Mission approvals, the team ensures overseas American positions are approved or eliminated in a consistent manner.

The office’s Innovation unit is known for original thinking on such issues as quality management, “green” diplomacy and universal service standards. Led by Bruce

Berton, Innovation is home to outreach and collaboration activities such as the Innovation Roundtable, Regional Initiatives Council (RIC) and the Management Issues Webinar series. Berton said the Department “has been repeatedly recognized by the Partnership for Public Service and other groups for our role in finding creative solutions.”

A key Innovation priority is the reinvigoration of the Department’s overseas quality management program, the Collaborative Management Initiative. Finding new ways to drive process improvement and quality ties in with other M/PRI initiatives, such as EDQI and the RIC Top 8, Innovation leverages other Department efforts; its collaboration with the Bureau of Consular Affairs’ 1CA program sets the groundwork for a Department-wide approach to management excellence.

Innovation’s Greening Diplomacy Initiative promotes better management through

sustainable and green solutions. It aided implementation of MeterNet, a global energy usage monitoring program that involves more than two dozen missions overseas and Department annexes across the United States. According to Landon Van Dyke, Eco-Diplomacy coordinator, “The MeterNet effort is expected to engender better power management through transparency and metrics on energy usage, promoting savings across the Department.”

All Department staff can take advantage of M/PRI’s assets, when facing a cross-cutting problem, by turning to M/PRI’s website to see if someone is already working on the same issue. These cross-cutting initiatives make working in M/PRI an exciting experience, and build a diverse group of professionals with deep expertise. Collaborating to build bridges with operating units across the Department is key to M/PRI’s—and the Department’s—success. ■



**Clockwise from Left:** Carlene Roy is M/PRI’s office manager; the author, right, meets with Program Analyst Katie Kirkpatrick; Contractor Jeff Martin is the office’s IT expert; at a meeting of the Greening Diplomacy Initiative and Innovation teams are from left, Mark Matthews, Marcos Correa, Helaina Matza, Albert Kafka and Landon Van Dyke.





From bottom left, guide Mise Misajlovski, the author and Political Assistant Adrian Ismaili and two Vratnica residents display artifacts from the site where the team discovered the WWII bomber.  
Photo by Spencer Fields

# Unearthing History

## Discovery of fallen WWII bomber unleashes memories

By Spencer Fields, political officer, U.S. Embassy in Skopje, Macedonia

In March, Ambassador to Macedonia Paul Wohlers asked Political Assistant Mitko Burcevski to learn what he could about an American bomber that had crashed in World War II near the village of Vratnica in what is now Macedonia. Embassy Air Attaché Lieutenant Colonel Boris Gershman was helping Burcevski, and as a former military officer and history major, I was eager to assist. Sensing my fascination with the topic, they turned the project over to me.

I thought the bomber might have been a B-24 that crashed after the Ploesti oilfield raid in August 1943. But after hours of research, I had hit only dead ends. All I had were vague details from a decade-old Macedonian newspaper interview with a villager from

Vratnica who recalled helping American survivors of a plane crash in 1943. I was about to give up when, after a presentation in Tetovo (about 40 minutes west of Skopje), I thought to ask how far it was to Vratnica. I learned it was about 20 minutes north.

"Let's just go there," I told colleague Adrian Ismaili, who'd joined me at the presentation. "We can walk around and ask people about the airplane until we find something."

We interviewed at least a dozen villagers, and from Vratnica's church records learned the date of the crash: Aug. 26, 1944. Buoyed by this breakthrough, I knew I had to go into the mountains around Vratnica to find the plane's remains.

Ten days later, I was on the steep face

of a mountain at 5,000 feet above sea level struggling for footing as the cool air chilled my sweat. My handheld metal detector, until then frustratingly silent, began to put out a high whine. I scraped away earth with blackened fingers and discovered a mangled piece of aluminum. Holding it up to the sun's light, I could see an even line of rivets, slightly warped by heat and time.

Farther up the slope, another member of my team, Mise Misajlovski, found another piece of metal, a small disc resembling the bent top of a soda can, but heavier, like steel. I brushed the face of the cylinder top against my jeans to reveal the neat brass lettering beneath: "Regulator Assembly ... Oxygen ... AN-6022-1."



We had found the plane. These rusting pieces of wreckage would connect me with the crew and their families, whose pictures, files and letters would help turn the bits of information we collected into a detailed mosaic.

Later, I reviewed accounts of the crash and put together this scenario. On Aug. 26, 1944, 23-year-old 1st Lt. Edwin Kieselbach struggled at the controls of the silver B-24, nicknamed "Our Love," trying to keep it aloft after weathering a hail of bullets from enemy fighters. His young crew of eight airmen was in bad shape. Co-pilot 2nd Lt. John Edwards, on only his second mission, sat slumped and unresponsive at his controls, his thick flight suit turning red. Tail Gunner Staff Sgt. William Rhodes and Ball Turret Gunner S/SGT Willis Stephenson were dead or dying at their posts onboard.

The plane was falling toward the rugged peaks of the nearby Sharr Mountains. Kieselbach maneuvered it into a valley, and Bombardier 1st LT Richard McCauley and Nose Gunner S/SGT Harold Viken yanked open a floor panel in the plane's nose to lighten it. S/SGT David Koblitz and S/SGT Bruce Tuthill forced open the bomb-bay doors amidships and with gloved hands furiously dumped equipment and shiny brass belts of ammunition into the frigid air.

Then, the aircraft's two vertical tail rudders were shot off by anti-aircraft fire, sending the plane into a spin of such power that it threw Koblitz and Tuthill out the bomb-bay doors and pinned the rest of the crew inside. McCauley and Viken wrestled free of the plane's nose and jumped out. S/SGT. Edward Ambrosini pulled himself through plane's waist window. Kieselbach clawed his way aft to the bomb-bay doors, and using all of his strength, pulled himself out onto the skin of the spinning plane and pulled the ripcord of his parachute.

On the mountainside below, villagers met Kieselbach, Ambrosini and McCauley, warning them they would be captured soon by occupying Bulgarian soldiers. The villagers carefully cut down the motionless Koblitz from his harness in a nearby tree, and carried a silent Tuthill down from the rocks above; the impact had killed him. Viken could not be found. The German-allied Bulgarian soldiers soon overwhelmed the villagers and took the survivors prisoner. A villager called after them, promising they would bury their comrades in the local churchyard, which they did.

After being transferred between several detention centers, Kieselbach, Ambrosini and McCauley were reunited at Shumen Prison Camp in Bulgaria. By mid-September 1944, the Russian advance through Bulgaria frightened off the camp's guards, and the trio fled back to their base in Italy. Afterward, they were transferred home to the United States. As for Viken, his fate would not be clear to his family until they received a notification in 1947 that his grave had been moved from Vratnica to Belgrade. His cause of death still remains a mystery.

All of the flyers' relatives whom I contacted were affected by what they learned. One, on learning about the crash and my discovery of the wreckage, responded: "With the few rusting pieces of the wreckage you recently recovered, you brought that event back to life and opened doors again for the families more than half a world away and more than 65 years removed. While there is much we may never know, your efforts sent many back to old and nearly forgotten albums, letters and in at least the case of my uncle's younger brother, to his Army-issued footlocker to review the bits and pieces of information to which their parents clung for hope during that difficult time."

The end to this story came Sept. 5, when, high on the mountain above Vratnica, Ambassador Wohlers called together a party that had hiked to the site, and included embassy staff, villagers, security guards and Macedonian officials. "I would like everyone to observe a moment of silence to remember the Americans who gave their lives on this spot nearly 70 years ago and also to remember the Macedonians who helped the survivors and buried the deceased," he said. "These airmen bravely risked their lives, and many gave their lives, far from home in places they probably had never heard of, fighting for the future of Europe and their own country."

Then, I stepped forward to read the crewmembers' names, and in the silence that followed, the sound of a lone airplane's engine high above echoed in the blue skies. ■



→ Top Left: standing Hill, Ambrosini, Scheiwo, Rhodes, Gaugh, Tuthill  
→ sitting McCauley, McKee, Kieselbach, Spier



**Top & Middle:** Members of the bomber crew pose while off duty and as they prepare for a mission. **Bottom:** Sergeant Tuthill shows off some of the bomber's anti-aircraft guns.

*Photos courtesy of the crews' families*





# Connecting with FLEX

Program helps employees broaden experience

By Ray Limon, director, Civil Service Human Resource Management, and Blakeney Vasquez, Foreign Affairs officer, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

Seven fellows from the Excellence in Government (EIG) program have worked with officials from several federal agencies to produce a program that responds to the Department's resource constraints, staffing and skills shortages, and crisis and surge-based needs. Their cost-neutral Functional and Leadership Exchanges (FLEX) Connect program allows for rapid responses to staffing challenges and lets employees rotate and gain new experiences. These rotations differ from detail assignments in that the program's web-based platform uses a virtual marketplace to place employees, rather than requiring them to know the right person or be in the right place to make a match.

The program's development team included Department employees Amy Christianson, Blakeney Vasquez and Alyce Abdalla, plus a staff member from the National Transportation Safety Board, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Homeland Security and Central Intelligence Agency. Over several months, the seven, all EIG fellows, worked with other agency colleagues, the Bureau of Information Resource Development (IRM) and Office of eDiplomacy to develop the project. They looked at the rotation/detail programs and policies of other agencies and the Department, and convened a focus group of supervisors.

They wanted a project that could provide human resources for immediate needs, develop skills to assist during crises or staff shortages, provide employees with experiences across offices and bureaus,

and create professional development opportunities. They saw the Department as an ideal place to create and test FLEX Connect because it has an impressive talent pool, the Director General's support and social media platforms for building its technological infrastructure. Based in Communities@State, the team designed the program as a decentralized platform to support 60-day local rotations or project-based contributions for Civil Service employees at the GS-11 to 15 levels and Foreign Service officers from FS-03 to FS-01.

The program's benefits to supervisors include being able to fill short-term gaps or gain surge capacity, and boost staff capabilities and institutional knowledge. Participants gain professional development and cross-training, broader understanding of the Department and networking opportunities.

The FLEX Connect pilot program ran from June through August. "Host" supervisors posted job opportunities, and employees entered skills and interests profiles and applied for opportunities. To find an employee with the needed skills, a host supervisor coordinated with the employee and his/her current supervisor, and all three then signed a rotation agreement.

During the pilot, the FLEX Connect site had 5,170 visits, 41 opportunities posted, 23 opportunities filled, 35 profiles posted and 139 subscribers to its distribution list.

The results were positive. Matt Chessen, senior innovation advisor



with eDiplomacy, said his office sponsored an opportunity to create online and offline training and education materials. “Not only were we able to find someone who was available and interested in the project, we found a training and education specialist,” he reported. The specialist gained a broader understanding of the Department by working in a new project environment.

Other opportunities were posted for intranet development and developing high-level communications plans or partnerships for youth exchanges. Dr. Tomicah Tillemann, senior advisor to the Secretary for Civil Society and Emerging Democracies (S/SACSED), said his office used FLEX Connect to gain expertise on developing a communications strategy. “The office often relies on detailees to assist with special projects on behalf of the Secretary of State and the President,” he said. “FLEX Connect has been a valuable program for our office and helped us find immediate solutions to staffing gaps.”

One employee who came to S/SACSED also liked the experience. Sue Levenstein, of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs’ (ECA) cultural exchanges office, wanted to see how public diplomacy is implemented in a different office. Now on a two-month rotation in S/SACSED, she’s developing and implementing a comprehensive communications plan. “This is allowing me to think outside the box in a new professional environment and deal with new challenges,” she observed.

FLEX Connect pairs bureaus that might not have otherwise worked together. During a two-week rotation, Antonio Antiochia, of the technology division that supports the Bureau of International Security and Non-proliferation (ISN/EX/TD), worked with ECA to create an OpenNet platform for collaboration across what would otherwise be separate Department operations. The deputy director of ISN/EX, Peter DiMichelle, said his staff has constantly been involved with interagency partners and Department bureaus on collaborative initiatives. “Whenever we have an opportunity, we encourage staff to work with other bureaus, as the exposure provides an excellent opportunity for personal growth, exchange of ideas and better understanding of problem solutions that we might leverage in future endeavors,” he said. “Antonio’s participation in the FLEX Connect program was truly a win-win for our bureaus and the Department.”



The program’s pilot test provided sufficient data and feedback to analyze and improve it, and sets the groundwork to build similar programs. The EIG Results Project Team is working with the other agencies represented within the group to implement the FLEX Connect model. Meanwhile, HR is working with stakeholders throughout the Department and with AFSA and AFGE on how FLEX Connect will be added to the Department’s array of professional development tools. The program’s rollout is expected soon, perhaps as early as December or January. More information, including updates on its release, is available online at [cas.state.gov/flexconnect](http://cas.state.gov/flexconnect).

It’s worth noting that FLEX Connect wouldn’t exist without the involvement of the EIG fellows, and it’s just one of several projects arising from the EIG program. Sponsored by the Partnership for Public Service for GS-14 and 15 employees, the year long EIG program involves coursework, best practices benchmarking, challenging action-learning projects, executive coaching and government-wide networking. Fellows remain in their full-time jobs, meet every six weeks and spend about 20 days in session. They devote up to five hours per week to their projects, which solve a federal government problem. ■

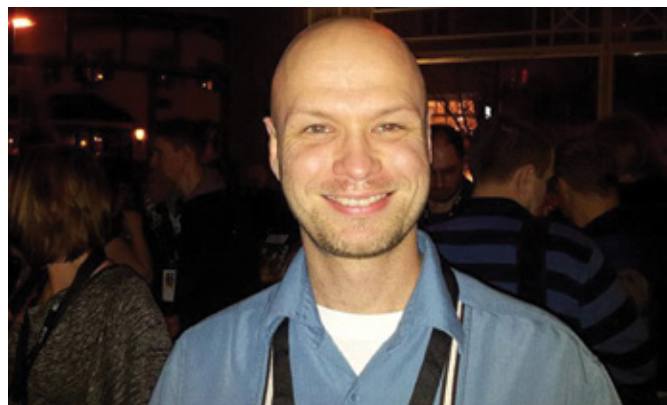
**Above:** The Fall 2012 fellows of the Excellence in Government program gather for their graduation photo in August. *Photo by the Partnership for Public Service*  
**Left:** Son Ae Filchak was one of the Bureau of Information Resource staffers who helped FLEX Connect set up the website where offices offered rotational opportunities during the program’s pilot test. **Opposite:** Blakeney Vasquez of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, left, and Amy Christianson of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs were among the three Department employees involved in creating FLEX Connect. *Photos by Ed Warner*



## Room Named for Sean Patrick Smith

On Sept. 11, the U.S. Consulate General in Montreal hosted a ceremony to dedicate its executive conference room in memory of Sean Patrick Smith, who was information management officer at the post from 2008 through 2011. Smith, a 10-year veteran of the Foreign Service, died in the September 2012 attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya. He is survived by his wife and two children.

At the ceremony, Consul General Andrew Parker recalled Smith's dedication and the challenges Foreign Service employees face daily, and presented a short video featuring pictures of Smith with friends, family and consulate colleagues. Several colleagues shared memories of Smith's love for Montreal, enthusiasm for life and impact on their lives. Smith is greatly missed at the consulate, where he touched the lives and hearts of everyone he met.



Prior to his Benghazi posting, Smith attended the consulate's July 4th party in 2009.

*Photo by Elio Fucile*



Volunteers including embassy staffer Kristen Grauer and son Alex, foreground, clean the beach on International Coastal Cleanup Day.

*Photo by Francois Amichia*

## Embassy Celebrates Coastal Cleanup Day

Staff from the U.S. Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire joined youth volunteers from a local environmental NGO run by an alumnus of the Study of the U.S. Institute on Social Entrepreneurship to observe International Coastal Cleanup Day, Sept. 21. The group cleaned up debris from a beach near Abidjan.

Chargé d'Affaires Cheryl Sim led the effort and said the activity "demonstrated not only our commitment to the local community, but that individuals can contribute to improving their environment." Economic officer Tom Hayes kicked off the event with a speech about the importance of everyone helping make the planet a better place to live.

Volunteers collected approximately 50 garbage sacks of trash along a 200-meter stretch of beach. The cleanup was covered by the national television station and about 15 other journalists. A local artist, a member of the NGO, is creating art using some of the debris collected.

## Ambassadors Meet on Mountain Peak

At nearly 2,500 meters, Ljuboten Peak in the Sharr Mountains between Macedonia and Kosovo is a challenging and beautiful hiking destination that can be reached from both countries. A year ago, Ambassador to Macedonia Paul Wohlers and Ambassador to Kosovo Tracey Ann Jacobson decided it would be fun to meet at the top, where brightly painted stones mark the border.

On Oct. 5, they and their spouses and several colleagues set out from their respective capitals on a sunny Saturday morning and met at the peak at noon for snacks and photos with views toward Skopje and Pristina. The photos included the flags of the United States, Macedonia and Kosovo, as well as the Union Jack, which was carried by Jacobson's husband, a British diplomat.

Command Sergeant Major Allen Dahl of Embassy Pristina's Office of Defense Cooperation recalled the event as "one for the bucket list."



Teams from Embassy Skopje and Embassy Pristina meet atop Ljuboten Peak.

*Photo by Will Smallwood*



# Retirements

## Foreign Service

Adams, Clifford T.  
 Alvarado, Enrique G.  
 Armstrong, Barbara Lenore  
 Baer, Simone  
 Barrow, Michael Alan  
 Bauer, Kevin W.  
 Bellard, Scott D.  
 Bennett, Vincent K.  
 Bentley-Anderson, Beryl L.  
 Berry, Gregory L.  
 Blakeman III, Earle C.  
 Boly, Richard Charles  
 Booth, Donald E.  
 Brown, Raymond Lewis  
 Butler, Lawrence E.  
 Caton, Margaret S.  
 Chalupsky, Steven J.  
 Chang, David Cheng  
 Chiaventone, Michael Mark  
 Cole Jr., Joseph W.  
 Conn, Nicole Renee  
 Darnielle, Barbara A.  
 Davis, Jason L.  
 Davis Jr., John P.  
 De Mott Jr., Thomas B.  
 Deuerlein, Rodger Jan  
 Dickey, Angela R.  
 Drew, Sarah F.  
 Dubose, Calvin E.  
 Dudley, James Lawrence  
 Dugan, Michael R.  
 Eagan, Michael P.  
 Eckstrom, Peter Thomas  
 Edwards, David Bryan  
 Ellingson, Tina Jo  
 Emerson, Angela B.  
 Fairfax, Kenneth J.  
 Fajardo, Carol Marks  
 Featherstone, Alexander A.  
 Feldman, Michael Alan  
 Fernandez, Francisco J.  
 Ferrill, Arlene L.  
 Ferry, Ronald A.  
 Fetter, David Richard  
 Finn, John W.  
 Frederick, George M.  
 French, Timothy J.  
 Glen, Judith M.  
 Hammond, Sylvia Lorrain  
 Harrison, Jennifer A.  
 Heinrich, Karen A.  
 Hillas Jr., Kenneth M.  
 Hill, Julia  
 Holland-Craig, Jacqueline Kay  
 Hollingsworth, Louis R.  
 Ingraham, Russell Pierson  
 Jablon, Brian A.

Jamerson, William B.  
 Johnson, Karen E.  
 Johnson, Kevin M.  
 Johnson, William J.  
 Kane, E. Jane  
 Kilner, Scott F.  
 Kopiak Jr., Andrew J.  
 Leader, Damian Riehl  
 Leaf, James Werner  
 Lee, Won Yong  
 Livingood, Leslie C.  
 Lokka, Duke G.  
 Margulies, Alexander H.  
 Marks, David M.  
 Marquardt, R. Niels  
 Martinez, Carmen Maria  
 McDonald, Diana G.  
 McGifford, Douglas G.  
 McQueen, Calvin L.  
 Milasi, Paolina  
 Miller, Samuel  
 Moore, Timothy W.  
 Muhm, Daniel R.  
 Navratil, Thomas J.  
 Nolan, Stephen James  
 O'Grady, Daniel J.  
 Owen, William H.  
 Patterson, Rex-Marc  
 Pavin, Sherril L.  
 Peterson, Barry R.  
 Peterson, Diane B.  
 Robinson, Brooks A.  
 Roe, Todd D.  
 Saeed, Ferial Ara  
 Sagitto, Edwina  
 Sandusky, Timothy Carlyle  
 Schamber, Maria D.  
 Sheehan, Regis P.  
 Sidabras, Viktor A.  
 Simmons, Angus Taylor  
 Simmons, Wendy A.  
 Stephens, Doris Kathleen  
 Stinehart, Julie A.  
 Sullivan, Margot A.  
 Tauber, Mark Steven  
 Thornhill, Mary Elizabeth  
 Tidball, Alyce June  
 Torres, Hector Federico  
 Truhn, J. Patrick  
 Walker, Marlan C.  
 Washington, Don Quintin  
 Weiner, Janice G.  
 Willig, Irene C.  
 Winant, John H.  
 Winton, Donna J.  
 Wohlers, Laurence D.  
 Young, Stephen M.  
 Zimmerman, Jane Buchmiller

## Civil Service

Barger Jr., John H.  
 Carter, Nancy O.  
 Chabra, Nicholas Charles  
 Chen, George G.  
 Cordova, Javier M.  
 Danvers, William C.  
 Farrell, Stephen T.  
 Fitzgerald, Betsy A.  
 Fuller-McCall, Lenora Rosalie  
 Hawkins, Kenneth L.  
 Kahigian, Peter  
 Kotwasinski, Ronald S.  
 Lyles, Donald R.  
 Maloney, Kevin  
 Mann, Elsie N.  
 Senykoff, Judith Ann  
 Sincox, Bruce T.  
 Smalls, Annabel J.  
 Stern, Joel

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(Required by 39 USC 3685)

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	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total number of copies (net press run)	28,527	22,480
b. Paid circulation (by mail and outside the mail)		
1. Mailed outside-county paid subscriptions stated on PS form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof, and exchange copies)	10,383	5,310
2. Mailed in-county paid subscriptions stated on form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof, and exchange copies)	N/A	N/A
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4. Paid distribution by other classes or mailed through the USPS (e.g., first-class mail®)	N/A	N/A
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1. Outside-county copies included on PS form 3541	N/A	N/A
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h. Total (sum of 15f and 15g)	28,527	22,480
i. Percent paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)	100%	100%

# Appointments

**Douglas Frantz**  
Assistant Secretary  
for Public Affairs



**Steve A. Linick**  
Inspector General for  
the Department and  
Broadcasting Board  
of Governors



**Victoria Nuland**  
Assistant Secretary  
for European and  
Eurasian Affairs



**Kenneth F. Hackett**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
the Holy See



**Kirk Wagar**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Singapore



**Terence P. McCulley**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Côte d'Ivoire



Check out our online  
magazine to watch a  
video message from  
featured ambassadors.

**Douglas Frantz** of Florida is the new assistant secretary for Public Affairs. Previously, he was deputy staff director for then-Senator John Kerry and chief investigator of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Before that, he was an editor at the Washington Post, Los Angeles Times and New York Times. He reported from 40 countries and shared a Pulitzer Prize for coverage of the aftermath of 9/11. He has authored 10 nonfiction books.

**Kenneth F. Hackett** of Maryland is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. Previously, he was an advisor to Notre Dame's Institution for Global Development. Before that, he was president of Catholic Relief Services (CRS). He worked overseas for CRS in Sierra Leone, the Philippines and Kenya, and led its relief efforts during the 1980s Ethiopian famine and 1990s Somalia crisis. He served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ghana.

**Steve A. Linick** of Virginia is the new Inspector General for the Department and Broadcasting Board of Governors. Previously, he was inspector general of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. He was an assistant U.S. attorney in California and Virginia, and executive director of the Department of Justice's National Procurement Fraud Task Force. He handled cases involving corruption and contract fraud against the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**Terence P. McCulley (SFS)** of Washington is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Previously, he was ambassador to Nigeria. Before that, he was deputy chief of mission (DCM) in Denmark and ambassador to Mali. In Washington, he helped coordinate reconstruction efforts in Iraq. He was DCM in Togo, Senegal and Tunisia, and also served in Mumbai, Chad, South Africa and Niger.

**Victoria Nuland (SFS)** of Virginia is the new Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs. Previously, she was the Department's spokesperson. Before that, she was special envoy for Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. She was ambassador to NATO, principal deputy national security advisor to the Vice President and chief of staff to the Deputy Secretary of State. Other postings include Moscow, Ulaanbaatar and Guangzhou.

**Kirk Wagar** of Florida is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore. Previously, he was managing partner of Wagar Law, P.A., a law firm specializing in insurance disability disputes. He was Florida finance chair for Obama for America in 2008 and 2012. He served on the Sub-Saharan African Advisory Committee of the Export-Import Bank and on the full Ex-Im Bank Advisory Committee.



## WHEN DIPLOMACY GOES TO THE DOGS

WHERE ARE MY BARKING POINTS?



I MAY NOT BE THE BIG DOG, BUT BY GOLLY I'M THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT BIG DOG!



SURE I'VE BEEN CONED CHIHUAHUA, BUT I'M HOPING TO BECOME MULTIFUNCTIONAL AS A GREAT DANE...



SORRY, DUTCH, BUT THESE BONES ARE ON A STRICT "NEED TO GNAW" BASIS.



DON'T WORRY- AMBASSADOR SHEP'S BARK IS WORSE THAN HIS BITE...



AGGELER 2001



# Solid Foundation

For retired FSOs, SLF has resources

By Paula S. Jakub, executive director, Senior Living Foundation

In December, budgets can get stretched thin, especially for retirees. For Foreign Service retirees who find themselves in financial difficulty at the holidays, or anytime, the Senior Living Foundation (SLF) of the American Foreign Service stands ready to help. The foundation supports them and their spouses (including widowed or divorced spouses), providing need-based aid to defray the cost of items such as home health care services, senior housing, long-term care insurance or other similar senior services.

Established by a group of retired Foreign Service officers in 1988 to support former colleagues facing the physical, mental and financial challenges of aging, the foundation today addresses the growing number of retirees, rising cost of medical care and increasing complexity of caring for the elderly. At first, SLF was limited to providing information and access to existing public and private programs. It made its first financial grant in 1995, and during the past 18 years has responded financially to an increasing number of requests. In recent years, its one-time and ongoing grants have exceeded \$250,000 annually, and surpassed \$300,000 for the first time last year.

As the needs of the Foreign Service community have grown, the Foreign Service and other donors have continued to respond to SLF fundraising.

SLF assistance can take several forms, beginning with information. For instance, an FSO contacted SLF to discuss her elderly father, whose physical and cognitive impairments necessitated modifications

in her home to facilitate activities such as bathing. We provided her with information about a caregiver support program in her area and encouraged her to consider the services of a geriatric care manager to monitor her father's care if she's away.

The son of a Foreign Service widow needed a geriatric care management assessment of his mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's disease and lives alone. Their rural location made finding a care manager difficult, but we referred him to a free program offered by his county's Department of Aging Services and to other resources that support and educate people dealing with Alzheimer's.

Others contact the foundation for one-time needs or emergency support. A recent widow of a retired FSO, still coping with the loss of her long time spouse, requested emergency assistance after being told it could take two months to process her claims for a survivor annuity and life insurance. Though the widow was still employed, medical expenses had depleted the couple's savings and she needed help paying her bills. SLF provided two emergency grant payments.

Seeking assistance in paying for medically necessary dental work, a retired FSO contacted the foundation. Her income was low for her geographic area, and paying the dental bills would significantly reduce her savings. We were able to assist her by paying for half the cost of the treatment.

The SLF also offers ongoing assistance to clients. For instance, it pays for a geriatric care manager for an FSO retiree who lives in a memory care assisted living facility

in Maryland. In addition, the foundation provides a subscription to the Washington Post, which the retiree reads every morning, and keeps several former colleagues informed of his status.

In 2009, a former Foreign Service employee contacted SLF for help paying medical bills, since Medicare did not cover the full cost of her recent treatments. She had dropped her Federal Employee Health Benefits insurance upon retirement and never signed up for a Medigap plan. SLF paid the outstanding medical bills and now pays for her Medigap plan. She has needed prescription drugs, medically necessary dental treatment and eyeglasses over the years, and the foundation has underwritten these needs.

While providing professional advice and support, SLF maintains confidentiality and treats clients with dignity and care. Once the foundation makes a commitment to an individual, it continues for life.

The SLF makes the most of every dollar received from donors. Whether their gift is \$5 or \$1,000, they can be sure their funds directly support the foundation's mission, since SLF's office space, staff salaries and many other administrative expenses are underwritten by the American Foreign Service Protective Association. With that sponsorship and the continued support of donors, SLF can continue its mission of "taking care of our own."

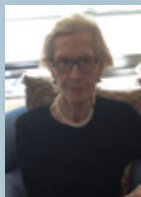
More information about the SLF is at [www.SLFoundation.org](http://www.SLFoundation.org), including ways to support its efforts and links to organizations tailored to the Foreign Service community. ■



# Obituaries



**Dr. Edward Hedrick Clarke**, 72, a retired officer with USAID, died Oct. 10 in Chambersburg, Pa. From 1983 to 1988, he worked in the economic policy division of USAID and served in Haiti, Morocco, Egypt and Liberia. Prior to that, he was a special assistant to George P. Schultz and served on the President's Council of Economic Advisors. He was heavily involved in airline and trucking deregulation.



**Virginia Rayburn Hall**, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Information Agency, died Aug. 14 of natural causes in Washington, D.C. Her postings included Hong Kong, Indonesia, Libya, Israel and Portugal. After retiring in the mid-1970s, she worked for the National Science Foundation. She collected art, artifacts, china and furniture from all her travels, and loved animals, especially her pet dogs.



**Floyd M. "Doc" Jones**, 84, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Aug. 13 in Bryan, Texas. He served in the Army during the Korean War. His Foreign Service postings were in Central and South America. After retiring in 1989, he volunteered with community organizations, and was active in his church and the Christian Veterinary Mission. He collected military items, weapons and Western artifacts.



**Marbie Marie Long**, 75, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 3 from an aggressive infection in Katy, Texas. She joined the Department in the 1990s and served in the Philippines, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Moscow, Amsterdam, Latvia and at the Dayton Peace Accords. She traveled to Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Paris, Germany and England, and enjoyed photography.



**Betsy Murphy**, 61, a retired member of the Senior Executive Service, died Sept. 6 in Charleston, S.C. She served from 1992 to 2010 in the bureaus of Administration, Public Affairs and Resource Management. After retiring, she was a vice president at Stanley Associates before forming her own company, LEM Consulting. She volunteered for the Congressional Medal of Honor Gala aboard the USS Yorktown and the American Red Cross.



**Jacqueline B. Poussevin**, 85, a retired Foreign Service translator, died Aug. 25 at her home in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. She worked with the Red Cross in her native France during World War II and the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C., before joining the Department, where she worked for 22 years. After retiring in 1988, she volunteered with the Red Cross and a local soup kitchen.



**William H. Sullivan**, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Oct. 11. He lived in the Washington, D.C., area. He served in the Navy during World War II. He was the last U.S. ambassador to Iran, and was also ambassador to the Philippines and Laos, where he helped initiate the Paris peace talks that ended U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. Other postings included Bangkok, Calcutta, Tokyo, Naples, Rome, The Hague and Saigon. After retiring, he lived in Cuernavaca, Mexico, before returning to the D.C. area.



**Celia M. Toner**, 72, wife of retired Foreign Service officer William Toner, died Dec. 22, 2012, of hepatic cancer in Gaithersburg, Md. A native of England, she joined her husband on postings to England; France, where she worked for the science office; Germany; Ecuador, where she volunteered at a church and orphanage; and Brazil, where she taught. She enjoyed meeting people from new cultures.

*Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960. For specific questions on submitting an obituary, please contact Bill Palmer at palmerwr2@state.gov or (202) 203-7114. ■*

## Classroom without Walls

**FSI launches management training via DVC**

By Abby Buskager, DVC training coordinator, Foreign Service Institute

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) focuses on using technology to more efficiently and economically provide education and training opportunities to American and Locally Employed (LE) Staff at embassies and consulates worldwide.

Recognizing the opportunity presented by digital networks to expand training offerings, FSI's Management Tradecraft Training Division (MTT) within the School of Area and Professional Studies (SPAS) launched a pilot program in November 2012 called "Digital Video Conferencing On-Demand." The program offers 21 on-demand training sessions from the five core sections of management training at FSI: Human Resources, General Services, Financial Management, Facilities Management and General Management. Digital Video Conferencing (DVC) courses vary in length from 1.5 to 4 hours.

So far, 1,063 employees from 37 embassies and consulates representing every regional bureau have benefited. Of the 89 completed training sessions to date, 12 have been in EUR, 19 in SCA, 22 in AF, 18 in NEA, 17 in WHA and three in EAP. Although Human Resources and General Management training have been the most popular, all MTT sections have delivered training sessions with multiple posts.

The ease of scheduling and the flexibility of MTT instructors and posts' management contribute to the program's appeal. Emails and

occasional telephone discussions are used to establish a course date and time that meets posts' requirements and fits MTT instructor schedules. Given time zone differences, instructors realize that early/late course start times are often necessary.

Affordability is another attraction, particularly when budgets are tight. DVC training sessions are free for Department personnel; other agency staff are assessed a nominal fee that rarely exceeds \$60 per session.

However, no matter how easy the process or economical the program, it would not succeed without demand. The success of the DVC On-Demand program has proven that overseas American and LE Staff have a hunger for more knowledge and a desire to improve their professional skills.

To take further advantage of technology as a delivery system for training and education, SPAS has equipped a digital studio from which all its divisions can connect with embassies and consulates via webinars. Digital video conferencing, Google+ Hangouts, Skype and other digital network capabilities will be available in the near future.

To learn more about DVC On-Demand, visit <http://fsi.m.state.sbu/sites/SPAS/MTT/DistLearn/DVCTraining/default.aspx> or contact FSI Management Tradecraft Training at [FSIMGTTR@state.gov](mailto:FSIMGTTR@state.gov). ■



Instructors Jeff Ogren and Chris Volciak present a Customer Service DVC training session to U.S. Embassy Kathmandu staff.  
*Photo by Sandra Niedzwiecki*



# After Hours

## Fixer-upper

Architect restores historic chapel

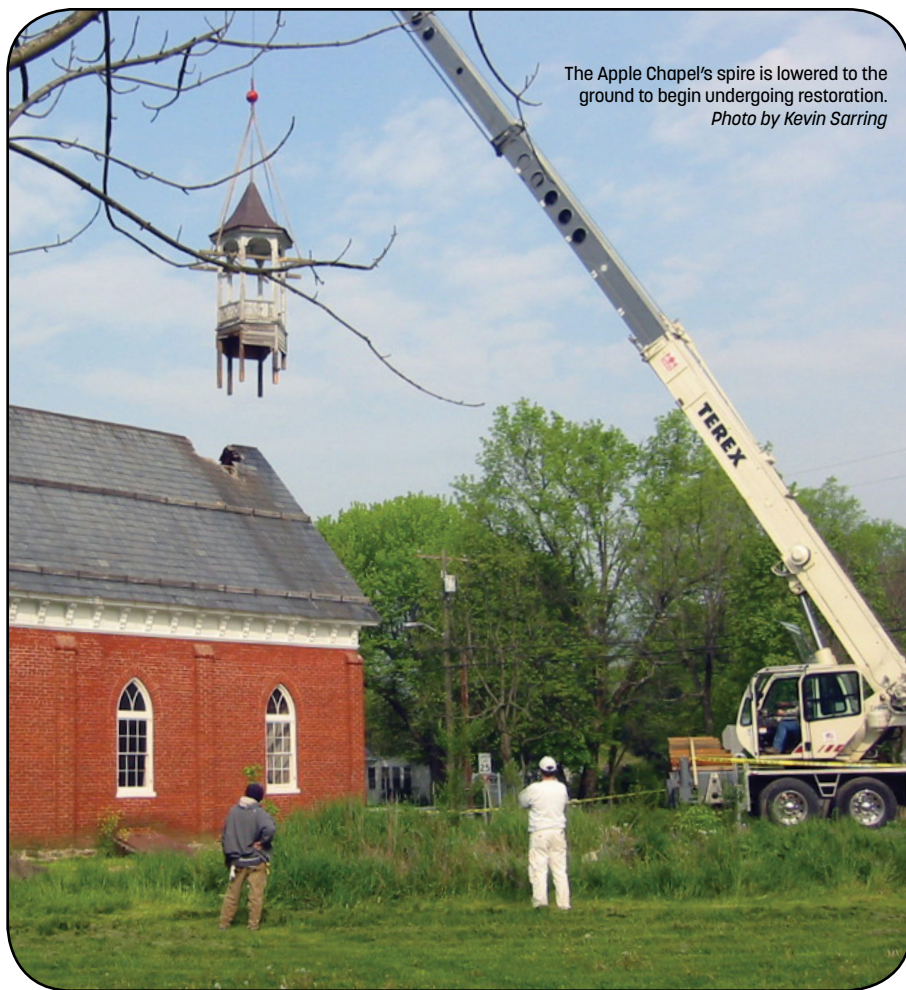
By Edward Warner,  
deputy editor, *State Magazine*

Kevin Lee Sarring, an architect with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, was at a meeting for a jail restoration when he fell in love with a chapel. It was an airy one-room former church in Gerrardstown, W.Va., that had been built in 1884 as the home of a Southern Methodist congregation. The chapel had been empty since the 1950s, when the congregation moved up the road, and was now for sale.

Appearing in a local real estate brochure, the chapel “spoke to me,” said Sarring, who specializes in preserving historic structures and has a few spiritual connections: he’s a Presbyterian, did archeology at the Vatican and had an uncle who was a Congregationalist minister. The reasonably priced chapel in a small unincorporated village on the National Register of Historic Places would eventually become his weekend retreat and studio—once restored.

Sarring bought the chapel and named it “Apple Chapel” for the apple industry in the Shenandoah Valley. He then spent the next 22 months not just repairing its falling ceiling and other decay, but returning the structure to its original beauty while meeting federal standards for historic preservation.

Sarring did the architectural drawings and some physical labor but mainly relied on specialists, some even from overseas. For example, the brick Gothic Revival building had an intact slate roof, but its tin ceiling was collapsing and its attic held a four-foot pile of twigs—a bird’s extensive attempt at a nest. Sarring found decorative plasterwork behind the tin ceiling and knew this now-rare artistry had to be saved. Similarly, he wanted to have the chapel’s new paint match the original. This called for expert advice from the “paint archeology” specialist who’d investigated historic painting at Washington’s Union Station.



The Apple Chapel’s spire is lowered to the ground to begin undergoing restoration.  
*Photo by Kevin Sarring*

In the process, Sarring became a member of this easy going community of 3,565, which he likens to the Mayberry of bygone television fame. Laid out in 1784 in the northeastern part of the state, about an hour or so from Washington, D.C., Gerrardstown has a historic center, where Apple Chapel is located, and numerous sites listed on the National Register. He now lives in the chapel when he visits on weekends, sleeping in a loft, and allows it to be used for community events, such as weddings, art shows and meetings of the historical society.

While it’s not unheard of for someone to convert a former church into a home, Sarring is unique in his desire to keep the facility open to the community, even installing a ramp to offer full accessibility. He integrated the ramp so well (it’s hardly visible from the chapel’s front) that it has been highlighted on a National Park Service historic design website.

Sarring said he wanted Apple Chapel to be available to the community because as a civil servant he is inspired by how Foreign Service officers work to improve their host communities. He also recognizes that “a

church is unique; you want to be respectful.” Sometimes when he’s staying at the chapel, visitors will knock and inquire, and end up getting a tour. Local children often climb into the steeple. The former organist came by once with a postcard of the chapel from the 1920s. A local man told of how, while attending a service there as a young man, he saw the most beautiful woman walk up the aisle, and how later the two of them walked up the aisle to be married.

Last year, Gerrardstown celebrated its 225th anniversary, and Sarring opened Apple Chapel for artists and tours. He also designed a T-shirt to raise funds for official village signage and drew up a town map.

By the time the renovation was completed in 2009, it cost twice the building purchase price. To cap the project, Sarring created a website, [apple-chapel.com](http://apple-chapel.com), so that others could enjoy his finished product as much as he did.

It’d be the perfect retirement home, except for one thing: Sarring, though 60, says he can’t imagine ever retiring. ■



# End State



## Namibia

The photographer's daughter, Julianne, pauses to enjoy the austere beauty of the Namib desert during a family hike to the summit of "Big Mama" dune in Sossusvlei.

*Photo by Jarrod M. Frahm*



## Oman

Despite the construction of a "corniche" roadway in the 1970s, and a new mosque in the 1990s, the Mutrah port in Muscat evokes an earlier time. The anchored dhow and traditional architecture are beautiful reminders of a bygone era.

*Photo by Charles O. Cecil*



## Sicily

A pleasant evening in Sciacca, Sicily, teases elderly gentlemen out of their homes for a pleasant stroll, and perhaps a good-natured Sicilian argument.

*Photo by Joseph Leavitt*



This year, we asked readers to submit photos highlighting people, culture and landscape in some of the amazing places they have visited over the years.

We received dozens of outstanding submissions, but these four shots stood out from the rest. We thank everyone who participated, and look forward to seeing what amazing visual adventures you take us on in 2014.



## Sudan

Young girls at an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp near Nyala, South Darfur, Sudan, peer through a fence to watch a State Department delegation tour a medical clinic.

*Photo by Kent Morris*





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